



Safety Spot

Community Risk Reduction

ELECTRICAL FIRE SAFETY



Energize Your Safety!

Flipping a light switch, plugging in a coffeemaker, charging a laptop computer, electrical appliances and devices make our lives easier. Electricity is safe to have in the home if it is treated with respect. The Colorado Springs Fire Department wants you to know the basics of electrical safety.

There are simple things you can do to make your home safe from an electrical fire. Make sure that the arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are a kind of circuit breaker that shuts off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home by a qualified electrician. Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.

Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use only. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don't have to use extension cords. Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture. There should be a sticker that indicates the maximum wattage light bulb to use.

SAFETY TIP:

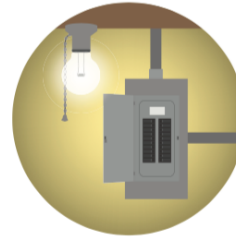
Do not overload extension cords.

Use them for temporary purposes only.

Replace worn, old or damaged extension cords right away.



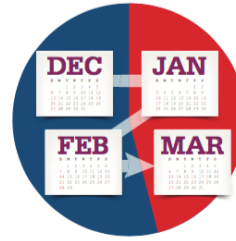
There are **nearly 47,800** home electrical fires each year.



About **half** of these involve lighting equipment or home electrical wiring.



Home electrical fire deaths peak between **midnight and 6 a.m.**



Nearly half (46 percent) of electrical fire deaths happen in **December through March.**

Action Steps You Can Take:

- Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified electrician.
- Only plug one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) in an outlet at a time.
- Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock.

CALL AN ELECTRICIAN IF:

- Frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
- A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
- Discolored or warm wall outlets
- A burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance
- Flickering or dimming lights
- Sparks come from an outlet

**Source US Fire Administration*